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**PHILOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL COMMENTARY ON
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TEITLER**

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accepting one of the central and controversial contentions of my book — that many passages in Ammianus' work contain a sustained, though often covert, anti-Christian polemic and reveal the historian as a militant pagan.

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T. D. BARNES

J. DEN BOEFT, J. W. DRIJVERS, D. DEN HENGST and H. C. TEITLER, *PHILOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL COMMENTARY ON AMMIANUS MARCELLINUS XXV*. Leiden: Brill, 2005. Pp. xxvi + 415. ISBN 978-9-00414-214-2. €119.00.

J. DEN BOEFT, J. W. DRIJVERS, D. DEN HENGST and H. C. TEITLER, *PHILOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL COMMENTARY ON AMMIANUS MARCELLINUS XXVI*. Leiden: Brill, 2008. Pp. xxx + 356. ISBN 978-9-00416-212-9. €109.00.

The Dutch commentary on Ammianus is a remarkable achievement. The first six surviving books, 14–19, were covered single-handedly by Pieter de Jonge between 1935 and 1982. The tempo accelerated in 1987 when the baton passed to Den Boeft, Den Hengst, and Teitler; joined subsequently by Drijvers, they have now taken us as far as Book 26. De Jonge's work focuses more on language than history and will in due course need replacing, but the current *quadriga's* commentaries are unimpeachably multi-disciplinary, immensely thoughtful and learned, and likely to be used and admired for generations.

Books 25 and 26 are highlights in Ammianus' history, with the death of the hero, Julian, and his replacement by inadequate successors, the short-lived Jovian, the brothers Valentinian and Valens, and the usurper Procopius. The commentators show due appreciation of the best passages, like Julian's last speech (25.3.15–20) and the tsunami (26.10.15–19), while allowing themselves to be impatient of the confused pseudo-learning of the digression on the calendar (26.1.8–14). They cover almost every question raised by the text in luxuriant detail, and the bibliography is comprehensive. They march in step like the tetrarchs: this collaboration has none of the open disagreements of Woodman and Martin on Tacitus or Nisbet and Rudd on Horace, which is perhaps a pity.

The commentary is at its best on matters of philology (the province of Den Boeft and Den Hengst). They marry the grammatical expertise characteristic of their nation to an alertness to the nuances of late Latin. They comment usefully on the successes and failures of the major published translations, and in numerous places explain Ammianus' often difficult usages (the palm goes to the explanation of why *convenerat* at 26.1.1 should be an *irrealis*). But they are notably bold — more, I think, than in previous volumes — about challenging Seyfarth's conservative Teubner text, which they use for the lemmata. Particularly outstanding and significant textual notes come at 25.3.6 (Julian's fatal wounding, where they propose the very meritorious *in certamine*), 25.7.13 (where the names of the Roman hostages guaranteeing the peace now include the senior general, Nevitta), but most of the rest are equally authoritative (see e.g. 26.10.5 <*paucos*> *post dies*, 26.10.16 <*r*>*evolutis*). They very occasionally defend the readings of the principal ms, the Fuldensis, against conjectures printed by Seyfarth (25.1.3, 26.5.1, 26.7.3), but much oftener argue forcefully for readings from Gelenius' 1533 edition, which may well go back to the lost Hersfeldensis (fourteen times), the conjectures of earlier scholars, especially Valesius (over twenty times), and conjectures of their own (about ten times). About fifty divergences in two books prompts one to wonder whether it is not time for a new edition. Personally I would have changed the text in another ten places (e.g. they are right at 25.8.15 to commend Petschenig's *medimnus*, but it should go in the text, not just the apparatus). My only criticism on textual matters is that the commentators do not always take enough account of Ammianus' exceptionally regular prose rhythm. It is striking how often odd grammar and asyndeton coincides with poor cursus: at 26.6.17 the active *detestabant* is previously unattested and produces a poor clausula, and restoring the deponent regularizes the cursus; at 25.3.17 an ugly asyndeton is also unrhythmical (read *inferens <vel> repellens* with Heraeus). At 25.4.19 the commentators should add rhythm to the arguments for their emendation *cum hæc <ita> essent*. Rhythm should have excluded E's *excogitata* from consideration at 26.5.13, and also calls into question their acceptance of Sabinus' *circulo* at 26.3.2 and G's *praeterlaberetur* over Valesius' *praeterlambere* at 25.10.5. Finally, while it is possible and plausible that Ammianus used *venire* for *evenire*, one of the three transmitted cases (*neque secus venit*, 26.9.4) gives a poor clausula (*evenit* would be fine), and in the other two (26.1.5, 29.1.26) the initial *e* could have been lost by haplography.

Questions of allusion — and Ammianus is very allusive — are comprehensively covered. One might pick out the use of Seneca to restore the text at 25.4.27, or a network of allusions to Lucan at 25.1.19 (apparently not previously observed). They equally expand our understanding of Ammianus' engagement with contemporary texts (e.g. 26.2.2 on Symmachus, *Or.* 1 and 26.10 (introduction) on Libanius, *Or.* 24; on Eutropius in the latter half of Book 25 add my *Ammianus* (2008), 240–53). They are understandably cautious on questions of source criticism. In just a few places allusive engagement could be better handled. At 25.3.15 (the opening of Julian's deathbed speech) they note the fact, but not the extent, of the similarity to one of Julian's first speeches, at the battle of Strasbourg (16.12.30). At 25.10.13, after the emperor Jovian's mysterious death in the night, Ammianus adduces an example: 'although a similar departure from life befell him as Scipio Aemilianus, we find that an investigation was pursued into the death of neither.' Earlier commentators compared Cicero, *Mil.* 16. Unfortunately, Den Boeft *et al.* quote the wrong part of the Cicero passage, relating to the death of M. Livius Drusus. The passage on Scipio's death is much closer to Ammianus' Latin, and attributes the death to *nocturna vis*. The case that Ammianus is hinting that Jovian was murdered is therefore much stronger than suggested here ('not a good idea').

If the historical aspects are not quite as authoritatively covered as the philological ones, they are still very good — and it is much less obvious what the responsibilities of a historical commentary are. Chronology is well covered in the introductions to each volume and *passim*; geography comes to the fore in the retreat from Persia; the two together in dealing with the rather tangled account of Procopius' usurpation. They are judicious on prosopographical questions. On Ammianus' general reliability they can be defensive. In particular they are reluctant fully to accept the case recently made by Barnes and Lenski, *inter alios*, for his tendentiousness about Jovian, though they occasionally offer evidence in support themselves (25.8.18). Other reviewers have commented on this (e.g. Kulikowski at *BMCR* 2006.04.31), so I will only add that at 25.5.8, they play down the significant echo of 21.16.21, which suggests that it was Ammianus' own view that Jovian's rule was shadow-like; at 25.9.11 they do not observe what was clear to Gibbon, that the *exemplum* of the Roman surrender of their disgraced general Mancinus to the Numantines in 137 B.C. hinted that Jovian deserved to be handed over to the Persians. The authors are generally hostile to Barnes' case that Ammianus was a militant pagan. They score a few minor hits at 25.4.3, 25.5.3 (though could this be a 'formal' second person plural?) and 25.5.8; but the absence of reference to Jovian's Christianity until his obituary (Book 25, p. xiii) is not conclusive evidence against anti-Christian bias. On the contrary, it shows that something very odd is going on.

There is nothing so controversial in the coverage of Valentinian and Valens, though they do not really engage with a view conveyed both in D. S. Potter's *The Roman Empire at Bay* (2004) and R. M. Errington's *Roman Imperial Policy from Julian to Theodosius* (2006). The selection of emperors after the dominant Constantius and Julian passed into the hands of the military high command and they chose those whom they could control. Valentinian is a much weaker ruler than his ostentatious *terribilità* implies, and we should reconsider the implications of anecdotes like that retailed by Ammianus about the *magister equitum* Dagalaifus (he told Valentinian that he could elevate his brother if he loved his family, somebody else if he loved the republic, 26.4.1).

A major controversy about these books concerns dating, and here the commentators are again helpful but not quite as helpful as they could be. In his Pauly article of 1894, Otto Seeck proposed that Ammianus had originally stopped writing at the end of Book 25 at the end of the 380s and that the last six books, 26–31, were added later. This view, which is neither unsupported nor compelling, has been taken as established by most scholars since, but in the last generation some heavyweights have argued for earlier publication of the final books (Straub, Cameron, Matthews, Barnes, and Lizzi Testa among them). The commentators have thought about these problems, but point in completely different directions. At the end of Book 25, the case is made that the final anecdote would not have been an inappropriate ending for a first edition; in the introduction to Book 26 it is argued that the last six books belong after A.D. 390 (cf. 26.5.14), and probably after the death of Valentinian II in A.D. 392 (presumably because of Ammianus' frankness about his father, though that argument would be more convincing if Valentinian II had not been a cipher). But in the commentary at 26.1.1, the most significant single prop for Seeck's dating (the interpretation of *convenerat* as referring to an earlier stopping point) is kicked away. It was a pity not to deal with the whole problem in the introduction to Book 26.

However, any minor criticisms and supplements which I offer here should not detract from our appreciation for this magnificent — and thankfully ongoing — scholarly monument.

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GAVIN KELLY

M. KULIKOWSKI, *ROME'S GOTHIC WARS FROM THE THIRD CENTURY TO ALARIC*.

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007. Pp. xii + 225, maps. ISBN 0-521-84633-1. £14.99.

A new CUP series, 'Key Conflicts of Classical Antiquity', aims to provide accounts at 'introductory-level' of what happened during some of the great wars of antiquity, as well as clear discussions of the surviving evidence and the problems of its interpretation. Michael Kulikowski's book on Rome's Gothic Wars is the first in this series to be published.

It is a fairly slim book, with 184 short pages of main text, minimal end-notes (for the most part citing only the relevant ancient sources), a 'Biographical Glossary' of the major *dramatis personae*, and four pages of suggestions for further reading. K. opens with a Prologue, placing Alaric before the gates of Rome (in A.D. 410), and posing the problem of how this famous moment in history had come about. He then turns back, to the first appearance of 'Goths' in Roman history, during wars of the third century, and leads us steadily through the fourth- and early-fifth century history of Romano-Gothic relations, in eight chapters that are partly chronological and partly thematic (introducing us, for instance, to fourth-century Gothic and Roman society). The story that K. tells is certainly an important one: we need only remember that the two most famous events in the dramatic collapse of Roman power in the Balkans and in the West — the devastating defeat at Adrianople in A.D. 378 (where perhaps two-thirds of the eastern field-army was lost), and the sack of Rome in A.D. 410 (the first time the city's defences had been breached for 800 years) — were both Gothic victories.

For the most part, this is a sensible, clear and uncontroversial introduction to the subject, which deserves to be included on any student reading-list. But, to his credit, K. is also happy to play an active part in current scholarly debates. He is a pupil of Walter Goffart, the die-hard opponent of any authentic 'early' Germanic history and of 'Germanic migrations' as the cause of the end of the Roman Empire, and he follows Goffart's lead fairly closely. In what is the most interesting and important chapter of the book, 'The Search for Gothic Origins', K. argues against any supposed 'pre-Danubian' migration and identity for the Goths (as described by the sixth-century historian Jordanes, and as interpreted in the material culture by some modern archaeologists). For K., the Goths were a third/fourth-century Roman invention, constructed for political and diplomatic reasons out of native peoples to the north and east of the Danube, rather than a newly-arrived people with any kind of earlier history and earlier identity as 'Goths'. Only 'in time, after being told repeatedly [by the Romans] that they were in fact Goths . . . was [there] no question in anyone's mind that they were indeed Goths' (70). Not everyone will agree with K.'s conclusions here, and I personally think his position is exaggerated — can people really be manipulated so effectively by outsiders? But he gives an admirably clear account of the debate within modern scholarship on the 'ethnogenesis' of the Goths (and other barbarian peoples), and is careful to present the conflicting evidence from both sides. Only in his suggestions for further reading does his balanced and scholarly mask slip somewhat, branding one historian who disagrees with him, Peter Heather, as a 'neo-romantic', which in K.'s vocabulary is certainly not a compliment.

He also disagrees with Heather's contention that it was the Huns who precipitated the movement of the Goths (and, later, other Germanic peoples) into the Empire, thereby causing the fall of the West — this he brands as an '*idée fixe*' that is 'simple, elegant, and wrong' (206). Here K. is less convincing, because, while doubting the contemporary and detailed testimony of Ammianus (who blamed the Huns), he provides no other explanation for why large numbers of Goths suddenly appeared on the banks of the Danube in the spring of A.D. 376, asking for shelter within the Empire. In my opinion, it is K. and Goffart whose ideas are a little bit too '*fixe*'.

Although not everyone will agree with everything K. writes, his book achieves most of the aim of its series: it is economical and clear, and it does indeed introduce the reader to the problems of evidence, and, above all, to the essence of modern debate. I shall certainly be placing it on reading-lists, alongside Heather's different take on the same events. K.'s considerable strengths lie in his discussion of what 'Gothicness' was (or was not), and of how Romans and 'barbarians' related in the fourth and early fifth centuries. Inevitably in a slim book, there are also some omissions. In